

Iowa Autism Council Meeting

Final Minutes 11/9/16

Meeting minutes taken by **Beth Buehler-Sapp**

- Present:** James Curry, Matthew O'Brien, Erika Hertel, Angela Burke-Boston, Theresa Croonquist, Steve Muller, Connie Fanselow, Wendy Trotter, Tara Underwood-Levin, Jenny Phan, and Beth Buehler-Sapp.
- Absent:** Andrea Keith, Brandon Reese Arkland, Rachel Heiss, Jan Turbes, Jeffrey Jennings, Susan Etscheidt, Rik Shannon, and Sean Casey.
- Guests:** Peggy Swails, Child Health Specialty Clinics/UIHC RAP Program.
Jessica Gallegos, UIHC-RAP program.
Kim Drew, Iowa Department of Education.
Judith Ursitti, Autism Speaks
- ZOOM:** Angela Logsdon

James Curry called the meeting to order at 10:10 am. Council Members and guests introduced themselves.

Council Members reviewed the draft minutes from the September 14, 2016 meeting. Erika Hertel made a motion to approve the minutes and Jenny Phan seconded the motion. Minutes approved.

WIOA presentation:

Kim Drew from the Iowa Department of Education gave a presentation on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. To see full presentation, click on link below:

<https://www.educateiowa.gov/documents/special-education/2016/11/fall-2016-wioa-presentation>

Highlights:

What is WIOA?

[Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Public Law 113-128](#)

- + Signed into law by President Obama, July 2014
- + Made major changes to Vocational Rehabilitation laws and programs
- + Purpose: "empower individuals with disabilities to maximize employment, economic self-sufficiency, independence, and inclusion in and integration into society."

Focus on Collaboration Between IVRS & LEAs

- + IVRS will become more involved and visible in the schools
- + IVRS will work within the schools to create a continuum of services
 - + Services will align with IDEA
 - + Services will not supplant the legal responsibility of the schools
 - + Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) - more detail to come
- + Goal of this collaboration is to develop a system that will lead to **competitive integrated employment** for students with disabilities, regardless of the level of disability

What does this mean for schools?

- + Does not change any of the transition requirements of IDEA for FAPE (i.e., work preparation)
- + Documentation is required before a person can enter sub-minimum wage employment (more details to come)
- + Schools cannot enter into contracts with agencies to provide sub-minimum wage employment
- + Schools can enter into contracts with these agencies for other services (i.e., job coaching)

Current & Future DE/IVRS Collaboration

Current collaboration continues:

- + DE representation on IVRS council
- + IVRS coordinates with DE in developing statewide VR plan
- + IVRS representation on Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP)

New requirements:

- + Coordination/collaboration on documentation requirements for youth known to seek subminimum wage
- + PETS available to all students with disabilities

There is a document on the Department of Education website that address FAQs regarding WIOA:

https://www.educateiowa.gov/sites/files/ed/documents/WIOA_Q%26A_Fall2016_Letterhead.pdf

Steve Muller suggested, we bring in someone from Vocational Rehabilitation to talk with the council about adult services – the process, partnerships, connections with existing providers, identifying avenues to disseminate information, etc.

Judith Ursitti reported Autism Speaks is hoping to begin focusing on transition services. She asked if there is specific training for VR counselors on ASD? (answer was not known)

Autism Speaks presentation:

Judith Ursitti from Autism Speaks gave a brief presentation regarding insurance reform and cost/benefit. She discussed with the council the limitations the Autism Support Program (ASP), and the potential benefits insurance reform could have for the state of Iowa.

Limitations include:

- the ASP is not equivalent to what would be deemed as a medically necessary services via a family's insurance plan. Families are paying their healthcare premiums and should be able to receive evidence-based, medically necessary care.
- ASP is a year by year, limited funding stream – subject to budget and could be cut anytime
- ASP is limited to 2 years of treatment

Judith explained that insurance reform is not just about the money, it's about the reversal of discrimination of individuals with ASD who are being told that because of their diagnosis they are not eligible to access medically necessary treatment like other policy members.

Overall, Judith feels very encouraged this year based on conversations with legislators that we may see some forward movement in insurance reform.

Judith shared with the group that there is a Facebook page “Iowans for Autism Insurance Reform” if anyone would like to check it out.

BCBA/BCaBA education grant update:

Iowa Department of Public health is receiving RFPs. They hope to make funds available for potential candidates in January.

Matt O’Brien asked if the RFP will only be available annually or will it be available more frequently so that potential candidates could access the fund for fall classes? Answer was unknown, but encouraged Matt to reach out to the Public Health representative for the grant to get an answer.

Regional Autism Assistance Program (RAP) update:

Peggy Swails reported:

- Tara Levine is resigning her position effective January 2017.
- They learned that RAP/CHSCs application for the HRSA grant was ranked 7th (6 states were awarded the grant)
- RAP is utilizing students to assist with moving some of the identified initiatives from their grant proposal forward despite not having been awarded the grant.

Autism Support Program update:

Connie Faneslow reported they have had a few more providers interested in enrolling in ASP:

- Behavior Care Specialists
- 2 others who are still working on medicare credentials before being approved

There are 4 applications for ASP pending; 2 of those are applications from clients over the age of 9 (with new extended age cap).

For October, 16 individuals actively receiving services and 21 eligible.

Sean Casey asked if it would be possible to have a graph illustrating the ASP data for our next meeting that shows growth and usage.

There was discussion about concerns related to what happens to these individuals receiving ASP funded services when the 2 years is over.

It was also reported that military families may have some ABA coverage so don’t qualify for ASP, but they still have a huge out of pocket cost, so accessing services is still cost prohibitive.

Matt O’Brien asked if the council could, in the future, suggest expanding the time limit beyond 2 years.

Year-End Report:

The year-end report is due to legislators by 12/12/16. Discussed council priorities for next year (2017):

- A. Insurance reform – require coverage for all evidence-based treatments for individuals with ASD to include all plans regulated by state insurance laws.
- B. Continued legislative commitment to, and funding of, the Autism Support Program.
- C. As Iowa prepares a Statewide Transition Plan to comply with the new federal requirements for residential and non-residential home and community-based settings (Home and Community-Based 1915(c) waiver and 1915(i) SPA amendment), the Council recommends that Iowa's plan not be more restrictive than the federal rules/requirements.
- D. Support continued implementation of the "Iowa Strategic Plan – 2016 - 2021: To Improve Services and Supports for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their Families."
- E. In the event the minimum wage in Iowa increases, consider a modification in the reimbursement rate floor for service providers.
- F. Continue to reduce the wait lists for HCBS waiver services.

Steve Muller recommended the council contact the Governor's office and ask for a meeting to share our report and recommendations.

Steve Muller made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Erika Hertel seconded the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.